



U.S. childhood obesity and climate change: Moving toward shared environmental health solutions

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Abstract:

This article focuses on the epidemic of childhood obesity, a significant cause of pediatric morbidity in the United States. It begins with a review of the evidence regarding environmental influences on obesity. Then it draws from that evidence to cite examples of climate change prevention and preparedness efforts that could also benefit the obesity problem. Climate change is a global environmental issue predicted to negatively impact children's health. In the United States, many regions are expected to experience worse air quality, increased vector-borne disease, and changes in food availability. Children's size, developmental stage, and long life expectancy make them unique when considering health effects from the environment. Furthermore, in the latter part of this century, the children of today will become seniors, a group also vulnerable to predicted health impacts from climate change. These vulnerabilities will contribute to existing health disparities that are due, in part, to unequal risk factors in communities of color and low income. Improved air quality, healthier diets, and increased physical activity are all potential results of climate change interventions. Unintended potential negative consequences are also discussed and careful pre-intervention assessment is emphasized. Interdisciplinary collaborations for research and solutions are needed for large scale environmental issues such as climate change and their impact on multi-factorial health problems including childhood obesity. Carefully selected climate change-related efforts can simultaneously address current children's health problems, future population health concerns, and ultimately result in more equitable health for all.

Source: Ask your librarian to help locate this item.

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker

Exposure :

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

United States

Health Co-Benefit/Co-Harm (Adaption/Mitigation):

specification of beneficial or harmful impacts to health resulting from efforts to reduce or cope with greenhouse gases

A focus of content

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Diabetes/Obesity

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Children, Elderly, Low Socioeconomic Status, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup

Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup: Communities of color

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content